

Contents

- 2 A New Institutional Structure for CAS

Conference Chronicle:
NEXUS Conference
'The Balkans – Mapping Identities, 2002

- 3 Conference Programme

- 5 Deconstructing Borders and Stigmas

- 10 **Larry Wolff** on the Significance, Surprises and
Campus-Novelishness of the Conference

Project Finale: Identity Reader

- 12 **Diana Mishkova** on the Results of the Identity Reader

- 13 The Canon of Identity-Building Texts

- 15 **Josef Jungmann's** Second Conversation
About the Czech Language

- 18 The Identity Reader Experience:
Three Participants Reflect on Their Work Together

Project Parade: Visual Seminar

- 20 Analysing Visual Codes

Project Nursery

- 23 Roles, Identities, Hybrids

- 24 Visions of National Peculiarity and
Political Modernities in the 'Europe of Small Nations'

A Library in the Making

- 27 The 'Balkan Bibliography' Is Now Ready

- 28 CAS Gallery

- 32 CAS Calendar



A positive, although critical, discussion of Balkan issues that did not set out with the ... prejudices and negative presuppositions of Balkanism ... We attempted to use 'Balkan' as the point of departure for a serious discussion in a whole range of disciplines over a region whose outlines can be mapped in so many different ways." This is how Prof. Larry Wolff, one of the keynote speakers, described the intellectual significance of the First International NEXUS Conference that took place in Sofia on 18 – 20 October, 2002.

A New Institutional Structure for CAS



Centre for Advanced Study in Sofia
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As of 1 April, the Centre for Advanced Study operates under a new institutional structure, designed to help it cope with the larger scope of tasks and challenges ahead.

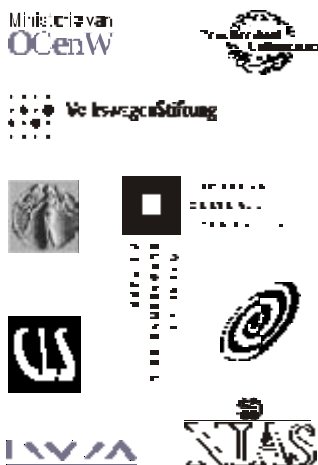
As before, a Board of Trustees will be the Centre's supreme body; it will take strategic decisions and perform supervisory functions; however, there is no Executive Board now. Instead, the Director will largely assume the executive function. The post of Director replaces the two former positions of Academic Director and Executive Director. Dr. Diana Mishkova has been appointed to that post.

A new body in the Centre's structure is the Academic Council. It is designed to perform the function of a standing advisory committee on scholarly and scientific issues, i.e. discuss proposals for participation in new research and educational projects, for appointment of new Fellows and for the selection of Permanent Fellows.

The function of Permanent Fellow is another novelty at the Centre. Permanent Fellows will be responsible for initiating and developing new projects, generating ideas and stimulating the intellectual dynamism of the Centre. The former Academic Director, Dr. Alexander Kiossev, and the present Director, Dr. Diana Mishkova, are the first such Permanent Fellows.

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Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski'
Director and Permanent Fellow

Dr. Alexander Kiossev,
Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski'
Permanent Fellow

Conference Programme

First section:

General problems of Territory and Identity. The Balkans in Time and Space

Chair: John Neubauer

Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu – Globalbalkanism

Klaus Dammann (co-author **Rossitza Ivkova**) – Observing Observers Using a Balkan/West Scheme. A Look from Niklas Luhmann's Sociology on the Historiography of Collective Killing in Anatolia, Bulgaria and Serbia

Larry Wolff – Balkanism and "Morlacchismo": Slavic Identity in the Mountains of Dalmatia

Ulf Brunnbauer – Mountains and National Myths in the Balkans

Monica Spiridon – A Balkan Chronotope: The Romanian "Orient"?

Drago Roksandic – Constructing and Mapping Borders in the Balkans (16th – 18th c.)

Second Section:

Imaginary Geography, Narrated Space, History of Space

Chair: Monica Spiridon

Marco Dogo – The Nation's Map in the Minds of Jovan Palikuca and Mateja Nenadoviæ (early 19th c.)

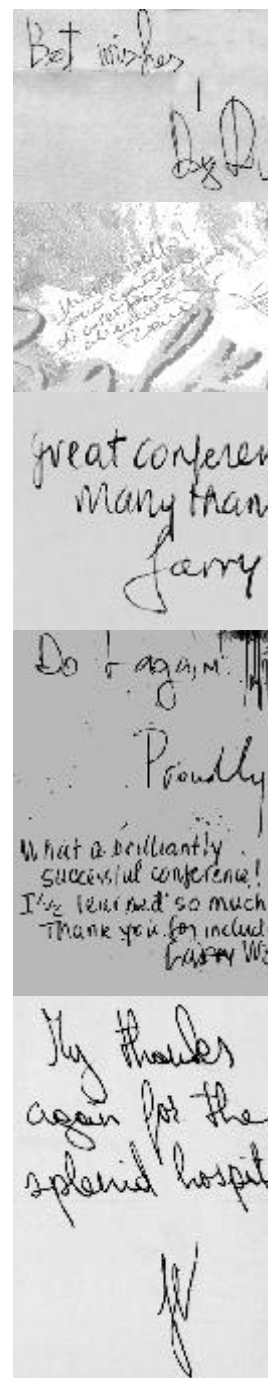
John Neubauer – Mapping Stories and Narrativizing Space

Nikolai Aretov – Imagined Geography of the Ottoman Empire in the Memoirs of Three Rebels (Stoyan Zaimov, Zahari Stoyanov and Mincho Kanchev)

Albena Hranova – Boundaries, Bridges, Roads, Crossroads. An Approach to a Balkan Figurative Map

Maria Nikolopoulou – Space, Memory and Identity: The Memory of the Asia Minor Space in Greek Novels of the 1960s

Blagovest Zlatanov – Mapping a "Holy" Territory: The Kosovo Case



Third section:

Mapping Economic Cultures

Chair: Ulf Brunnbauer

Roumen Avramov – *The Twentieth Century Bulgarian Economy: Producing Symbolic Codes and Identity*

Rumiana Preshlenova – *Frontier Revisited. Building up Identities in the Context of Balkan Economic Development 1878 – 1912*

Tanya Chavdarova – *Small Entrepreneurs in Sofia and Skopje: Between Individualism and Collectivism*

Fourth section:

Shifting Identities and Minorities

Stefanos Katsikas – *Muslim Minorities in an Orthodox World: Socio-economic and Organizational Changes of the Muslim Communities in Thessaly 1881 – 1912*

Aleksej Kalionski – *Bulgarian Karakachans about their Past*

Fifth Section:

Making of Identities: Political Projects, Political Reforms

Chair: Klaus Dammann

Emilia Salvanou – *The Making of the Greek National Identity in Greek Speaking Orthodox Communities of Eastern Thrace: Aspects of Modernization Process*

Yonca Koksall – *Local Cooperation and Conflicts – The Tanzimat Reforms in the Provinces of Edirne (1839 - 1878)*

Eyal Ginio – *General Conscription and the Invention of Ottoman Identity – The Non-Muslims in the Ottoman Army during the Balkan Wars (1912 - 1913)*

Ludmilla Kostova – *The Balkans and the Ethnological-Culinary Victorian Imagination: Food in Writing by Nineteenth-century British Travellers to the Region*

NEXUS Panel

Chair: Vintila Mihăilescu

Slobodan Naumović – *"Neither Left Nor Right. Straight!" Mapping the Paradoxical Shifts in Serbian Political Topography after 1989*

Dessislava Lilova – *Bulgarian Names of the Balkan Peninsula in the Nineteenth Century*

Alexander Kiossev – *Mapping the City. The Multicultural Plovdiv of the Nineteenth Century versus the Imaginary Territories of National Literatures*

Sixth Section:

Multiple Identities

Chair: Ivan Ilchev

Ioannis Manos – *Visualizing Culture – Demonstrating Identity: Dance Performances and Identity Politics in a Border Region in Northern Greece*

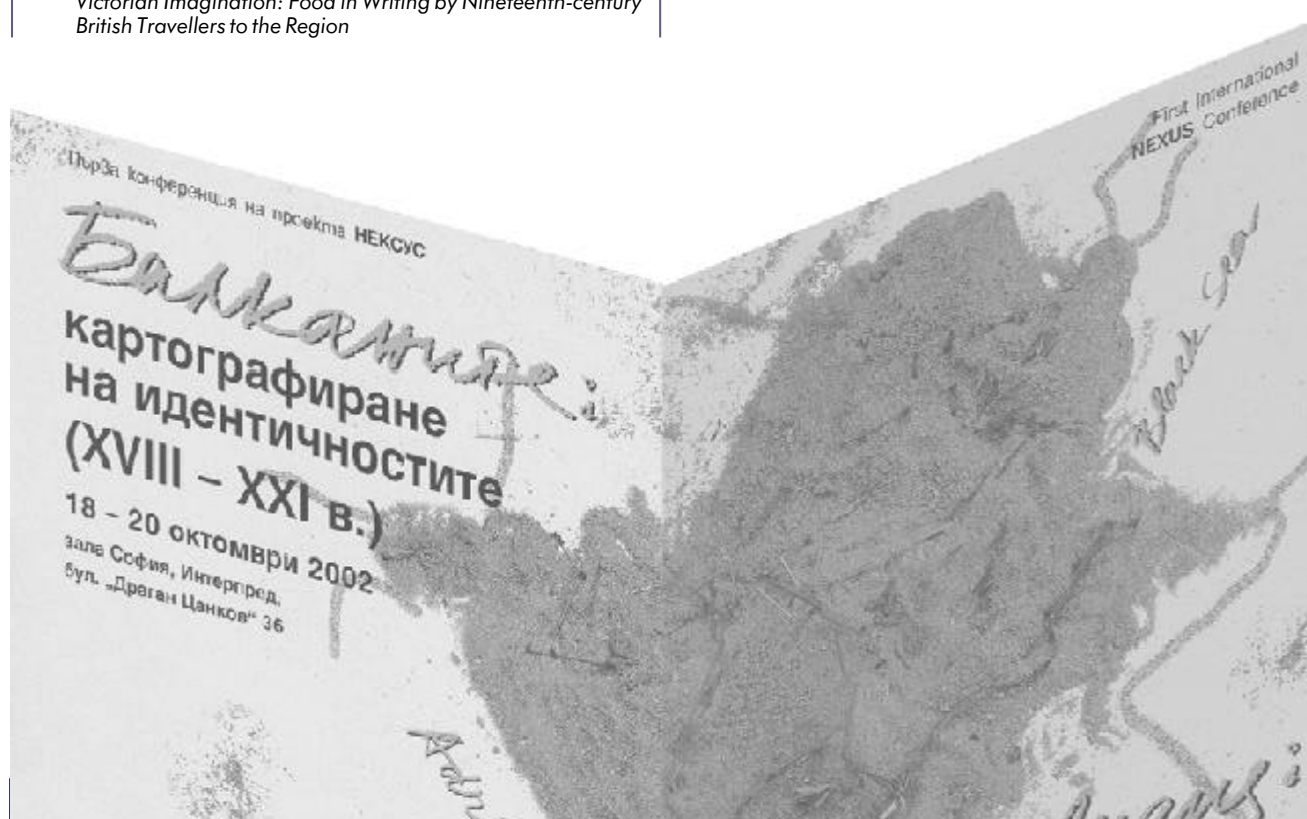
Leyla Neyzi – *Prehistories of Nationalism: Cosmopolitanism and the Spaces of Nostalgia. The Life History Narrative of an Elderly Native of Smyrna/Izmir*

Nadejda Alexandrova – *Mapping the Image of the Harem in the Nineteenth Century Bulgarian Literary Texts*

Laura Sakaja – *Stereotypes of the Balkans among Zagreb Youth: A Contribution to the Study of Imaginative Geography*

Stefan Datchev – *Between "Slavic" and "Bulgarian" - Russophile and Russophobic Discourses and Bulgarian Identity (1886 - 1894)*

John Ashbrook – *Re-visiting and Revising Bakic-Hayden's "Nesting Orientalisms": The case of Istria in the 1990s*



The First International NEXUS Conference: Deconstructing Borders and Stigmas

The Goals

The First International NEXUS Conference took place in Sofia on 18–20 October 2002. It was intended to study the notion of “space” in its potential, and often actual, role as a constitutive element in the processes of identity building. Since identities and acts of identifications can be projected in space, they often constitute (and are dialectically constituted through) a variety of real and/or imaginary maps. Historically, the Balkan/SEE region has been a palimpsest of identity-projections. For centuries it has been targeted by various military, ideological, institutional and phantasmagoric mappings - their borders often crisscrossing and overlapping. Even today, the peninsula continues to challenge the ideal of homogeneous territories; it remains an eclectic mixture of modern, pre-modern and post-modern geographies and modes of life.



As mentioned in the Call for Papers, the organizers of the Conference set out with the belief that the Balkan territories and mappings should not be considered as ontologically given, but rather as dynamic and shifting cultural constructs, complex mediators in the game of political and cultural power. Although some of these constructs have existed for centuries and given expression to strong collective feelings of belonging, although they are not simply illusions but constitutive elements of collective memory and identity, yet the symbolic/real geographies they create are conflicting, overlapping and difficult to reconcile. The First NEXUS Conference set out to address precisely this diversity and its inherent contradictions.

In terms of its role in the project, the Conference was aimed at presenting the results of the NEXUS team in front of an expert international audience, and thereby both disseminating and testing those results. In the words of Blagovest Zlatanov, one of the NEXUS Fellows, it was an occasion for the CAS group of scholars to build up its self-confidence and their ‘first opportunity to legitimate the work of CAS’ internationally, to have their ‘collective inauguration before the scholarly community in the area of Balkan Studies’.

The Results

In all these respects, the Conference was a resounding success. It initiated ‘a positive, although critical, discussion of Balkan issues that did not set out with the ... prejudices and negative presuppositions of Balkanism

... We attempted to use “Balkan” as the point of departure for a serious discussion in a whole range of disciplines over a region whose outlines can be mapped in so many different ways.’ This is how Prof. Larry Wolff, one of the keynote speakers, described the intellectual significance of what happened. In the words of Tchavdar Marinov, writing for the *Kultura Weekly*, ‘contrary to initial skepticism, the Conference ... successfully deconstructed mapped borders and dominant stigmas, the very invention of the Balkans as a region, as well as the “symbolic geographies” giving flesh to perceived Balkan cultural patterns. The participants did this in a delicate, dialogic way, in full awareness of the pitfalls of uncritical positive visions.’

All participants enthusiastically endorsed the NEXUS project and agreed that it was producing valuable results.

The Details

The Sofia Conference Hall in the Interpreted Building at 36 Dragan Tsankov Blvd. hosted this lively interdisciplinary exchange of views on Balkan identities. Even though Park-hotel ‘Moskva’, a Sixties tower building where the participants were accommodated, loomed large in the background, the significance of communism in the recent history of identity mappings was one issue the debate did not address in detail.

The Conference focused on the mapping of local, national and regional identities both in the gaze of the West, projecting itself as a symbolic center, and in the self-scrutiny of the local imaginations. Papers ranged from perceptive theoretical disquisitions to interesting case studies. One felicitous arrangement was that participants were given much time for discussion

after each paper (up to 30 minutes) and at the end of each session, and the resulting exchanges were as interesting as the previously prepared contributions. The audience was dominated by a dynamic group of younger scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and the absence of certain more traditionalist local scholars in Balkan and Slavic Studies was conspicuous and regrettable.

Maria Todorova’s idea of Balkanism as a stigmatizing discourse and her book on *Imagining the Balkans* were a constant point of reference for many participants. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend the Conference herself. But her ideas were a departure point for the opening presentation, delivered by Calin-Andrei Mihailescu (University of Western Ontario) in a turtleneck sweater, arms folded on his chest. He tackled what he termed ‘Globalkanism’. He claimed that, while the discourses of Orientalism and Globalism had their counter-discourses, there was no such counter-discourse to Balkanism as yet, and stressed the need for intellectual resistance to such stigmatization in the context of the process

of globalization. John Neubauer (University of Amsterdam) criticized Todorova’s relative neglect of fiction in studying Balkanism, and an argument ensued between Neubauer and Alexander Kiossev on the interpretation of Chapter 7 of Todorova’s book. Dr. Kiossev maintained that Todorova’s claim that the Balkans really exist should not be interpreted ontologically, but should rather be viewed as part of the hermeneutic reconstruction of the invention of the concept of ‘Balkans’.

Larry Wolff (Boston College), author of a seminal work on *Inventing Eastern Europe*, presented a medieval case study of identity projection – he held the audience captive with an intriguing and well-narrated account of the Venetians’ casting of highland Slavs in Dalmatia as an embodiment of primitiveness under the name of ‘Morlaks’, hence his designation of such stigmatizing discourse as ‘Morlacchismo’. The speaker finished by toying with the idea of a possible connection between the ultimate demise of Morlacchismo in Italy and the coincident birth of the phenomenon described by Todorova as Balkanism.





In this eventful first day, Klaus Dammann (University of Bielefeld) examined the treatment by Balkan historians of cases of 'collective killing' through the perspective of Niklas Luhmann's sociology, while Marco Dogo (University of Trieste) and Drago Roksandic (University of Zagreb) explored the imagining of national space in actual maps of the Balkans from the 16th to the early 19th C. Their visual aids graphically displayed the wishful obfuscation of real political borders by anachronistic or imaginary projections. Alben Hranova (Plovdiv University) used wit, irony and humour to examine and question the imagining of Bulgarian space in textbooks and nationalist writing such as the poetry of early 20th-century author Nayden Sheytanov.

The symbolic construction of space was also tackled by Ulf Brunnbauer (University of Graz), who studied the function of the mountain in national myths in the Balkans, by Monica Spiridon (University of Bucharest) – who examined the 'Romanian "Orient"', by Nikolay Aretov (Institute of Literature, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences - BAS) – who described the imaginary Ottoman space in memoirs by Stoyan Zaimov and Zahari Stoyanov. Blagovest Zlatanov (Sofia University) examined the case of Kosovo as a sacred territory. Maria Nikolopoulou (NEXUS Fellow) explored the fictional representation of Asia Minor in the memories of Greek refugees. The same phenomenon – the trauma of memory in that region – was viewed by Leyla Neyzi (Sabanci University, Istanbul) through the personal history of an elderly inhabitant of Smyrna/Izmir.

The evening of the first day of the Conference seemed, perversely, to corroborate the stigmatizing clichés of Balkanism. It ended in literal Balkan obscurity as a power failure at Park-hotel 'Moskva' plunged the participants in darkness and forced them to climb to the cocktail party at a top-floor restaurant in a single file, carrying candles. Luckily,

the spirit of the participants was not dampened; the candle-lit party only spurred more excitement and debate. Those who reached the buffet dinner served could later compare it to the descriptions of Balkan food in 19th-century British travel writing, analysed by Ludmilla Kostova (University of Veliko Tarnovo).

The first day of the conference focused more on representations, while the second and third day had their share of papers on economic, political and cultural practices, contradicting or transcending traditional nationalist ideas. As Boyko Penchev, writing in *Literaturen vestnik*, notes: 'The urge to examine not only representations, but also practices characterized the Conference. It has been a long time since historians, sociologists, economists, anthropologists, and cultural studies people have listened to each other with such attention ... realizing through the presentations of the scholars from other disciplines the inevitable limitations of their own scholarly fields of inquiry'.

One instance of this was the NEXUS economists' panel on the second day of the Conference – one of two panels composed entirely of NEXUS Fellows. Roumen Avramov (Center for Liberal Strategies) spoke about the link between the economic modes in 20th-century Bulgaria and the production of identity. Tanya Chavdarova (Sofia University) explored the culture of small entrepreneurs in Sofia and Skopje. Roumiana Preshlenova (Institute of Balkan Studies, BAS) demonstrated the extent to which trade and capital movement between Bulgaria and its Balkan neighbours went counter to the political discourse of the young Bulgarian state around the turn of the century. Another fascinating case of an identity-influencing practice was described in Ioannis Manos's case study of the relationship between dance performances and politics in a border region in Northern Greece.

The turn of the century and earlier periods were at the focus of many papers. The Bulgarian National Revival pe-



riod was considered extensively: Nadezhda Alexandrova demonstrated convincingly how Bulgarian literature of the period took part in shaping national identity in a 'European' mould, distancing itself from what it defined as 'Oriental' features of the Ottoman culture while being acutely aware of being stigmatized by the West as 'Oriental' too. She illustrated this with the example of the image of the harem, depicted by Bulgarian writers as a place of exotic and excessive sexuality and sensuousness. Dessislava Lilova (South-Western University, Blagoevgrad) discussed the Bulgarian names of the Balkan peninsula in the 19th century, showing to what extent the idea of Bulgarian national space at that time was an abstraction, flexible and open to multicultural interpretation, exposing the lack of precision in specifying geographical borders in articulating the national vision.

Alexander Kiossev (Sofia University) showed the limits of such flexibility using the example of Plovdiv, which was, in the Ottoman period, the largest and perhaps the most diverse of present-day Bulgarian cities, an Ottoman Babylon. Its diversity was perceived as a danger to national purity, earned it a bad reputation in Bulgarian literature and resulted in its being contrasted unfavourably to the smaller, 'pure Bulgarian', mountain townships. The speaker gave a gripping account of the purging of the city's diversity of

cultures, which, while not exactly co-existing in a liberal multicultural bliss, had nevertheless given its life a unique richness. He described the way the uniform public space of the nation state had to be constructed over the rubble of older ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, whereby, for instance, a Turkish cemetery became a public park. Both Dessislava Lilova's and Alexander Kiossev's talks were part of the other all-NEXUS panel, focusing on imagining identities.

An interesting and very well-documented addition to these narratives of the shaping of 'Bulgarianness' was the account, by Stefan Detchev (South-Western University, Blagoevgrad) of the rhetoric of Russophobia in Bulgaria in 1886-1894, which performed incredibly illogical U-turns in trying to impose anti-Russian imagery and ideas onto a traditional Bulgarian Russophile mindset.

Other perspectives on the processes of modern nation-building included the paper of Yonca Koksul (Koc University, Istanbul) on Tanzimat reforms in Turkey (1839-1878) and of Eyal Ginio (Hebrew University, Jerusalem) on the invention and imposition of an 'Ottoman' Identity on non-Muslim conscripts during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913). Naturally, minorities were discussed too - Stefanos Katsikas spoke on Muslim minorities in Thessaly 1881-1912, and Aleksei

Kalionski (Sofia University) on the Bulgarian Karakachans.

There were interesting presentations tackling the present day too. Stereotypes of Balkan neighbours among today's young Croats were the subject of the paper by Laura Sakaja (Institute of Migration and Ethnic Studies, Zagreb); perhaps predictably, these stereotypes turned out to be negative and often based on ignorance of the neighbouring cultures – for instance, Croatian youths would express disbelief at the fact that a popular song they enjoyed was actually written and performed by Serbs. John Ashbrook (Community College of Allegheny County, USA) considered the stereotypes of Croats from Bosnia-Herzegovina, considered by the people in Croatia proper as war criminals, thieves and thugs. Issues of former Yugoslavia were also discussed by Slobodan Naumovic (Belgrade University), who demonstrated the inapplicability of the political labels 'Left' and 'Right' to the Serbian case, where nationalism, support for reforms and conservatism coexist in kaleidoscopic permutations.

During the final discussion, NEXUS Convenor Alexander Kiossev summed up the proceedings by dividing notionally the presentations into four groups: first, those looking at identity in a *longue-duree*, historical, perspective; second, those looking at the



**John Neubauer,
University of Amsterdam:**

I've been Balkanized in the positive sense. What I have taken with me from this conference, and I hope this is what the Centre itself is promoting, is the idea that there is not one Balkan discourse but many discourses, voices that speak, change over time and take different positions within new configurations. That, I think, would be a positive way of talking about Balkanization, that is, individualization without the nationalist connotations. That is a good way of talking about the area.

**Leyla Neyzi,
Sabanci University, Istanbul:**

It was as much fun as Balkan conferences tend to be. We usually have a lot of controversy in these meetings, while this one was very collegial and very enjoyable.

processes of production of identity, whereby cultural and other institutions acted as homogenizing factors; third, those examining the manipulating of identity for political purposes; and fourth, those demonstrating what he termed the 'consumption' of the produced identity, its adaptation, intimization and re-negotiation in everyday life. As Tchavdar Marinov aptly notes in the *Kultura Weekly*, the Conference was also marked by 'the tension between the pole of the Orientalizing outside vision of the Balkans and the attempts for its deconstruction on the one hand, and, on the other, the critique of local ideological stereotypes'.

The Conference generated genuine excitement and ended reluctantly. John Neubauer, for example, postponed leaving for the airport until the last minute; with his taxi waiting, in an emotional farewell address, he declared himself very happy to have been Balkanized by this Conference. Other participants also expressed genuine delight at the shared intellectual agenda, the atmosphere of goodwill and co-operation.

Many participants have agreed to have their papers published and an edition of Proceedings is currently being prepared.





*Prof. Larry Wolff,
Boston College,
on the Significance,
Surprises and
Campus-Novelishness
of the Conference*

Prof. Larry Wolff

on the Significance, Surprises and Campus-Novelishness of the Conference

Did something surprise you at this conference?

One of the wonderfully surprising things was how present Maria Todorova was, even though she was not present in person, and what an important point of reference her work was for so many of the papers. I think hers is the most brilliant book published in the field in the last generation, and her book – representing her in her absence – turned out to be the point of departure for so many of our discussions.

What words would you use to describe what happened during the past three days if a colleague from Boston asked you?

If I had to explain this to my colleagues in America, I would use Calin Andrei Mihailescu's first talk as a starting point for discussing the rest of the conference. Remember, he talked about the circumstance that Balkanism does not have a positive counterpart, that there is no positive discourse to place in opposition to Balkanism. I would try to explain to my colleagues that in Sofia we had what could be seen as the beginnings of a positive, although critical, discussion of Balkanist issues that did not set out with the same prejudices and negative presuppositions that Maria Todorova has so brilliantly described in her book. We attempted to use 'Balkan' as the point of departure for a serious discussion in a whole range of disciplines over a region whose outlines can be mapped in so many different ways.



Is your interest in 'Morlacchismo' part of a larger research project? If it is no secret, what are you working on right now?

It definitely is part of a larger research project – 'Venice and the Slavs' – about the connections between Venice and Dalmatia in the eighteenth century and what it meant to the Venetians to rule over an empire of Slavs, where "Morlak" was the most striking formulation of who those Slavs were. It is related to the work I did on 'Inventing Eastern Europe' in the sense that it is a particular case study of what East and West could mean and how they were articulated in one particular region on the Adriatic. This case study took place within one empire, the Venetian Empire, very small but from my point of view very neatly articulated in terms of East and West, with its Italian part west of the Adriatic and its Slavic part on the east coast. The Morlaks are interesting to me because they defined the Eastern portion of that empire in primitive terms, the same terms that were being used throughout the Western Enlightenment to talk about Eastern Europe. In this particular case, as it was within an imperial structure, the Morlaks actually provided a kind of civilizing mission for the Venetians, who were therefore both politically and culturally committed to this project of discovering and explaining to themselves who the Morlaks were— in terms of the Venetian Republic and the European Enlightenment at large. 'Morlacchismo' is thus part of my long-term interest in how the Slavs were discovered and understood by the rest of Europe. I thought that some of the talks here were incredibly illuminating from that point

of view, for instance Stefan Detchev's last presentation on what being Slavic meant in Bulgaria in terms of Bulgarian-Russian relations or Albena Hranova's talk about Bulgaria and the 'Sea of Slavs' in literature at the beginning of the 20th century.

Do you believe academics have anything to teach politicians? Should academics be given more political clout? As an academic, would you become a politician if someone put you up for election?

I am not sure I have the temperament or even the capacity for political life, that is to say I am an absent-minded professor, I get lost between the conference hall and the hotel, and I am not sure whether academics in general would be forceful political figures. I am sure, however, that academics ought to be consulted by politicians when the latter are thinking about policy issues. I will leave it to you to decide how important this would be in the Bulgarian context, it seems to me that it would be appropriate for academics to be consulted on a whole range of issues, but in the American context it would be absolutely essential. And, say, foreign policy towards this region would benefit enormously if academics with some understanding and expertise on the subject were consulted more frequently than they are right now. In the case of America one striking thing is how difficult it has been for us to liberate ourselves from Cold War paradigms. These defined our policy for a very long time and, to be honest, they shaped academic life as well, for almost half a century after the end of the Second World War. In some sense we academics are still struggling to free ourselves from such paradigms. (This is something that Maria Todorova and I talked about a lot in the 1990s— with the sense of even being embattled within our disciplines, trying to change some of the entrenched ways in which aca-

demics were thinking.) Governments and policy-makers have only just begun to realize how new and transformed the international world is, how it requires new outlooks, and I would even go so far as to say, in the spirit of the conference, how it requires new mental, cultural and policy maps. One of the striking things about the conference is that it so obviously belongs to a new world, a post-Cold-War world in which all kinds of issues that would not have been on the table ten years ago are suddenly open for discussion and people are being very brave in taking new paths and exploring new approaches to old academic problems.

Was there anything campus-novelish about the conference? As you said to me at some point, David Lodge defined for us who we academics are. Was there a comic element to this conference?

I think that is always present in academic conferences. David Lodge not only defines who we are to some extent, but also reminds us that we have to regard ourselves with a sense of humour and that it is absolutely essential. One of the dangers of academic life is perhaps taking ourselves too seriously, exaggerating our own importance in the world, which is actually not so great. At such conferences one would like to be able to step back and view our endeavours *modestly* and therefore with some sense of humour. In this vein, I should tell you that someone at the conference told me; 'I'm not the character in Malcolm Bradbury's "Doctor Criminale"', so obviously we *do* define ourselves with reference to fictional academic figures.

What did you miss in the proceedings?

There are several things we might have talked about more at the conference, and which I look forward to dis-

cussing in future conferences. One subject, which came up several times and is clearly very important, is the Byzantine legacy in Southeast Europe—and the Orthodox religion. Another set of issues, which were implicitly present but not explicitly addressed at the conference, were Communism, the Cold War and issues of policy that are related to the new world we live in. Last, I would have been interested, along the lines of Laura Sakaja's last presentation, to hear about present attitudes towards this part of the world. Back in America I have three kids. The oldest is 18, and, curiously, like my students now, he has no memory of the Cold War or any personal associations with Eastern Europe and communism. He belongs to the same generation as the high-school students that Laura surveyed in Zagreb, a generation whose ideas we as professors would like to shape, since they are the people whom we educate. I have a younger son, the youngest of three, who will grow up to have no memories of the twentieth century, period. His great obsession right now, which must be the case for children in Bulgaria as well, are the novels about Harry Potter. Because of that I have read them too and happen to know that the most recently published volume is very significantly concerned with Bulgaria and Bulgarians. It has a very prominent Bulgarian figure in it, bearing the properly medieval name of Krum, who functions as a rather sinister and alien force in the novel, though in the end he turns out to be not absolutely evil. I cannot help wondering what such associations will mean to my son, who is seven-and-a-half and has none of my Cold War associations with Bulgaria and Eastern Europe. For him the details of 'Harry Potter' are just free-floating cultural items that he acquires very young and presumably very powerfully. I would be very curious at some future conference to talk more about the ways in which various cultural items connected to the region circulate in the world at large.



Diana Mishkova
Identity Reader Project Supervisor

Diana Mishkova on the Results of the Identity Reader

The end of the Identity Reader project faced us, our Newsletter editor and myself, with the need to introduce a new rubric that would mark the ending of an important CAS initiative and survey the results achieved. However, while agreeing with the legitimate expectation of a retrospective and evaluative gaze, I felt reluctant to comment on the 'outcome' of Identity Reader in the past tense. This could have been a largely sentimental reluctance, since the work on the Reader has been much more than just an academic exercise, for me and everyone else involved: it has given us a style, an outlook, and a special zest. So, I'd rather look at what followed.

The CEU Press has decided to publish the huge manuscript of the Reader in three volumes under the preliminary title 'Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1775-1945): Texts and Commentaries'. The first volume will be structured around two chronological-thematic units, Late Enlightenment – Emergence of the Modern 'National Idea' and National Romanticism – Formation of National Movements; the second will deal with Modernism – Creating National States; and the third with Anti-Modernism – Radical Revisions of Collective Identity. Our hope is to have these released at a price that will make them accessible also to East Europeans and university students in general, as the Reader can be used as a textbook in courses of history, comparative literature, European Studies and political philosophy. Other editions, especially in the languages of the region covered by the project, are likely to appear too: there has already been manifest interest in this respect expressed in Greece, and we hope that, in the long run, the work will become available in various Central and Southeast European languages.

Furthermore, while negotiations for publication were underway, a future large-scale projection of the Identity Reader 'frame of mind', called "We, the People. Visions of National Peculiarity and Political Modernities in the 'Europe of Small Nations'", took shape (see the Project Nursery rubric further). The idea has received considerable intellectual support from a range of renowned scholars, and its practical feasibility has been confirmed at a meeting at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Uppsala.

Thus, it makes more sense to talk of the project's future, rather than of its past outcomes: perhaps a good occasion to consider initiating yet another CAS Newsletter rubric.



The Canon of Identity-Building Texts

The following extract comes from the theoretical introduction to the Identity Reader. It is reproduced here in order to highlight the methodological novelty of this work and present certain theoretical premises on which the now-completed work of the Identity Reader team was based. The introduction itself has been written collectively; thus, what follows is in the collective voice of the entire research team.

In this project, the [key] term ['identity'] is used in its *geisteswissenschaftlichen* meaning, in accordance with Ricoeur's philosophical theory of (narrative) identity. It is obvious that 'national identity', as a kind of collective identity, is constituted by discursive practices, as specific manifestations of the social praxis. Such a discursive construction of national identity re-directs the temporal axes of past, present and future exhibited by the organizational criteria, such as 'origin', 'tradition', 'change', 'eternity', 'anticipation,' etc. The process of national identification is thus characterized by the discourse of national 'uniqueness,' which is after all a relational term, similar to ideas of 'sameness' and 'difference'.

In this respect, the 'identity-building texts' do not refer only to political writing or literature. From the perspective of the identity-building process, the genre of the chosen texts is of less importance. What matters is the role and the meaning of the text. This poses the debatable issue of *localizing* the text. Moreover, apart from *diachronic* conceptual divergences, we should also be aware of *synchronic* divergences in a given tradition, due to the incompatibility of the different discursive modes related to different genre-practices. Every cultural tradition consists of a plurality of texts of different genres, belonging to different cultural fields. From this point of view, one has to ask again, what kind of texts are to be identified? The answer is

quite simple: 'identity-building texts' are texts of *any kind*. To offer a different answer would be to restrict the epistemological field of the whole enterprise. Hence, the collection of texts extends from national anthems and constitutions to revolutionary songs and historical novels, from political or cultural manifestos to philosophical treatises. The Project refers virtually to any written text that significantly contributed, in one way or another, to the process of national and regional identity formation. However, this does not imply that only canonized texts, subsequently mythologized and/or institutionalised by their respective national traditions are to be collected. Texts that attempted to formulate alternative projects of collective identity should also be included. This assumption brings us to two crucial methodological points, namely the disposition of the 'national canon' and the text-context relationship.

How can one make a well-balanced selection of texts representing a 'national canon'? Firstly, the crucial notion of canon should be 'conditioned.' After all, we share the epistemological skepticism about the notion of canon, which was abused to some extent in the literary theory of the last decades. However, it seems to be the most appropriate term for our goals. 'Canon' refers to an ensemble of texts with a certain degree of 'representativity' and a clear normative effect. The canon, of course, could function as a representative unit not only as an





The Canon of Identity-Building Texts

to collective traits and local specificities as well as at exploring the complexity of the process of canon formation, and the competition of alternative normative formulations of the given community. It is nonetheless important not to *discipline* the local projects by undermining their potentiality and creativity. This is reflected in avoiding the projection of a universal teleological scheme of development for these cultures and conversely suggesting a scheme that strives to combine two crucial aspects of the Project: *the shifts of cultural configurations and the emergence of national ideologies and movements*.

objective entity, but also as a mere ideological construct. We are aware that every attempt to construct a canon is already a (*re*) *construction* – and it is this paradoxical law that guarantees its existence. However, one of the main tasks is to be attentive to the various aspects of representativity and, consequently, to select texts presenting not only the dominant national narrative (which is always related to a given historical moment and ideological trend), but also the competing ‘alternative canon’, the suppressed side of the given canon. In addition, one should not forget the process of historical mimicry of the canon, the fluctuations in its composition. Being in a process of constant retrospective (*re*)production, the canon offers no possibility of thinking about it as an a-temporal structure.

Only texts that are mediated by other texts are selected. In other words, only the reference of other texts to a given text can prove its ‘canonical’ function. On the other hand, the typical canonical texts will be supplemented with other very important, but quite unknown, ones that were not so influential in the process of identity-, and, respectively, canon-building, but are crucial for the understanding of that very process. These are texts reflecting on the identity and the very making of the canon. Moreover, in order to locate the texts as referentially as possible, they should be analysed in their content and form (here different kinds of discursive strategies could be discerned, namely constructive, justifying, transformative, destructive, etc.), but there also should be an outline of ways of extra-, and intra-cultural transmission, the processes of cultural institutionalisation and canonization. It is, thus, possible to negotiate and compare differences and similarities as well as to re-thematise these canons within their international cultural and political frameworks.

This does not mean, however, that the Project intends to construct a supra-national canon (or even identity) by domesticating the specific and idiosyncratic local narrative traditions. This collection of texts aims both at giving voice

The second basic methodological question is that of text and context. How can the opposing categories of text and context be related to each other? ... Largely, the examination of the selected texts rests on those models that employ literary methods in analysing historical problems and texts (Hayden White, Dominick LaCapra). In other words, we do not necessarily want to describe a reality that exists beyond interpretation or outside the text. In many ways, we are searching for an ‘inter-textual reading’ of these cultures, a reading that re-positions the relationship between text and context ...

Our approach is thus *textual*: it intends to collect identity-building texts and not to identify representative figures of the national canons *through* texts. The figures of the canon could be important only through their textual being, their *textualization*. For example, Vasil Levski, the canonical figure of Bulgarian national identity building process, has not written any programmatic text that could have become identity-building as a text, so he cannot be presented in the reader as an ‘author.’ However, some of the most famous oeuvres of the Bulgarian national romanticism were devoted to him, which means that he is part of the Bulgarian canon and, respectively, of the Reader as a literary and not as a historical figure, as a textual object and not a subject. In this sense, the *textual canon* we are looking for could be in a pronounced opposition with the national ‘pantheon.’

Lastly, how could ‘identity-building texts’ conflate with the ‘national canon’? ... What is suggested in this project is an alternative perception or rethinking of the standard concept of the unity of national history. This constitutes one of the main ideological projections of the research. By unveiling the heterogeneity of the canons and of the process of identity-building and by pointing out the composite nature of identity itself, the project questions the metaphysical boundaries imposed by the nationalist projects in this region.



Josef Jungmann's Second Conversation About the Czech Language

The following extract is a sample of the actual body of the Reader, reproduced to illustrate further the Reader's 'logarithm'. The primary text has been further abbreviated for reasons of space.

PART II. National Romanticism – Formation of National Movements

CHAPTER II, Spirit of the Nation: Folklore, Ethnocultural us, language, religion Josef Jungmann: Second Conversation About the Czech Language

Bibliographical Data:

Title of the text:

Second conversation about the Czech language
(O jazyku českém rozmlouvání druhé)

Author:

Josef Jungmann

Original Publishing Information

Hlasatel český (Czech herald), Nr. 1, III, 1806, Prague

(city, publisher, date):

Language:

Czech

Genre:

pamphlet

Additional information: source:

Josef Jungmann: *Boj o obrození národa. Výbor z díla Josefa Jungmanna* (Struggle for the rebirth of the nation. A selection of the work of Josef Jungmann), Felix Vodička (ed.), Praha, F.Kosek (publ.), 1948, pp. 31-50

Information about the Author

Name:

Josef Jungmann

Date and Place of Birth and Death:

1773, Hudlice – 1847, Prague

Brief Biographical Information:

A linguist, translator, literary scientist and lexicographer. He revived words of the old Czech literary language used before the Counter-Reformation, created some new words and when necessary, borrowed words from other Slavic languages, namely, Polish and Russian, to overcome the weakening of the Czech lexical fund. With his brilliant translations of F.R.Chateaubriand, John Milton, J.W.Goethe etc., into Czech he laid the foundations of modern Czech poetics. He is credited with the revival of the literary and poetic Czech language in the early times of national movement.

Main Works:

Slovesnost [Bellers-lettres] (1820), Historie literatury české [History of Czech literature] (1825), Česko-němcký slovník [Czech-German dictionary], 5.vol., (1835-1839)

Contextualization of the Text

Josef Jungmann is the most important representative of the second generation of the Czech awakeners, among whom the language still enjoyed the greatest interest. Nevertheless, in comparison to the "purely scientific" interest of the former Dobrovský's generation, Jungmann and his compatriots were much more enthusiastic about the Romantic national ideas usually connected with Herder. In this time of a broad cultural renaissance, primarily in literature and theater, Czech



patriots developed their ideas of patria and nation, which went beyond the former concepts linked with the region. The motherland was identified with the language and customs of the nation, i.e. all people using Czech language in contrast to former “political” nation of nobility. At the same time the theoretical conception of the German nation (Arndt, Jahn, Fichte) fully developed, which, considering the strong German cultural influence, even strengthened the “language” conception of the Czech nation.

The journal *Hlasatel český* played an important role in this development. Edited by Jan Nejedlý, it undertook a mission to prove that Czech could be used for the highest cultural functions. In the first year of its existence Josef Jungmann contributed two articles “*Conversations about the Czech language*”.

In the first article, Jungmann lamented the condition of contemporary Czech in comparison to “the golden age” of the Czech language that is its humanist form of the 16th century. However he concluded: “that a nation is still alive, whose language has not completely died”. In the second dialogue Jungmann turned to the prospects for the future of the Czech language. As for its genre, the *Conversations* is still to be classified as a “language defence”, however from the previous cases it differs in its structure of argumentation. Firstly, Jungmann openly compared the Czech with the German national movement. Even though the Czech

culture is in an inferior position to the German, this doesn’t entail a general inferiority of the Czech nation for Jungmann, because Germans were similarly in an inferior position towards French culture a few decades earlier. Secondly, Jungmann applied the Herderian “primordial” conception of the nation. In this respect, the language is a kind of incorporation of the “philosophy” of the nation, since it mirrors its character and customs. Thirdly, a new trait is to be seen in Jungmann’s structure of the “utility argument”. The Czech language was to be preserved not primarily because the nobility needed it for communication with the serfs, conversely, the language was to be preserved exactly because these “common people” needed it. In this sense Jungmann stressed the civic and democratic (egalitarian) element in the Czech nation-building process, which was a condition for the subsequent mass agitation.

Jungmann’s *Conversations* are generally perceived as an important turn in the thinking about the Czech language and the usage of the concept of nation. It was widely interpreted as Jungmann’s first draft of the “national program”. However, recent interpretations tend to argue that it was not Jungmann’s main intention to agitate. Moreover, there was no broader response to his article for more than ten years. It was only in the 1820s when his linguistic concept of the nation proved to suit the development and Jungmann came to be known as the “creator” of the Czech national program.

Text:

Slavomil and Protiva

Protiva:

I was quite surprised by how you of all people led the whole discussion away from the main topic to another, quite different matter; or, to be more precise, from love of country to love of the Czech language, which seemed to me so ridiculous. [...]

Slavomil:

[...] Allow me to ask you, what nation dwells in Austria? You'll definitely say, 'Germans!', just as you ascribe France to the Franks and Russia to the Russians, without denying that all of them have their own homeland. Well, what makes the Franks Frank, the Russians Russian and the Germans German?



Protiva:

The fact that each has its own community and administration!

Slavomil:

But what if all their lands were united under one administration? Wouldn't they be, as before, various nations?

Protiva:

It would be one community based on Germans, Russians, Franks.

Slavomil:

One community, but of different nations. Each of the nations would be limited by itself, and I do not think that anybody could so easily persuade the Russian that France

was his country. Although the French, as the main cosmopolitans, are at home everywhere, would not neglect to praise loudly the whole area west of the Rhine as their homeland. And, then, where one administration, one law, even, say, one religion, where would the clear difference between the nations originate from?

[...]

Protiva:

In other words, as many nations as languages, and as many homelands as nations?

[...]

Slavomil:

[...] Does not each nation have its own experience and own upbringing? And isn't language like a warehouse of all the arts and all knowledge of man, through which wealth goes from father to son, just as in each family? And what else? Language is the most excellent philosophy, which is formed by its particular geographic region, mores, thinking, inclinations and thousands of other different qualities from one nation to the next [...] without love of the language of one's homeland one cannot think about love of one's country or nation; and the Czech may therefore sing with outright boldness: If we become Germans, we shall be a nation, but no longer Czechs! [...]

Translated by Derek Paton

The Identity Reader Experience: Three Participants Reflect on Their Work Together



Michal Kopecek



Vangelis Kechriotis



Maciej Gorny

The degree of enthusiasm in the youthful participants in the Identity Reader project was evident from the fact that I hardly managed to interview them - literally all of their time during the final workshop was spent working feverishly on the final products.

Earlier, I had overheard them refer jokingly to a 'Slavic brotherhood' and, when I finally got hold of them, I asked Maciej Gorny, Michal Kopecek and Vangelis Kechriotis what that was. 'We have a community of historical experiences but hardly a "Slavic brotherhood". In the Polish case, "Slavic brotherhoods" are quite unpopular anyway,' Maciej said. Michal explained that their private joke came 'out of the fact that in the project we are dealing with issues of national identity, so it is natural to crack a joke by saying "Oh, no, this is a Pan-Slavic brotherhood we are dealing with here" or "Here comes Balazs the Hungarian". Of course,' he claimed, 'through the project we have got to know the others' identities and learned that we all have very much in common. Within the team there are no internal divisions except on an ad-hoc basis on specific problems. We are friends. We like to socialize together.' Vangelis smiled and said that in Istanbul a friend had warned him: 'You [meaning the Southerners - Greeks and Turks] are going to be devoured by the Central Europeans'. One of the real differences, according to Vangelis, was that they 'came from different political backgrounds - post-Communist vs. non-Communist - and sometimes our frames of reference would differ: "Liberal" or "Radical" or even "Left Wing" had a completely different meaning for them than they had for me'.

What, I asked, was the best and worst time they had had on this project? To Maciej, his stays in Bulgaria were both best and worst times, because they had always been hectic. He remembered fondly the beginning, when he saw the suggested project as a way to deal with the oversimplification of the idea of Polish uniqueness, of Polish history being incomparable to any other history. Michal said: 'I had a fantastic time at the Sabanci University Conference, a success because of the way we organized the workshop - everybody had to read another's paper previous to the event - which generated great discussions. The other great thing there was the emerging understanding inside the group, the feeling of common ground with people from Turkey to the Czech Republic. And, of course, Istanbul itself was a fantastic experience.' Michal claimed he had no bad experiences, only a few problems getting used to working through the Internet.

'Who needs your Identity Reader?' I asked, somewhat provocatively. Maciej replied: 'I hope the Reader will successfully address the needs of students of history in the region, and that it will interest American students as well. When I studied at Warsaw University, I had just one lecture on comparative Central European history - delivered by Maciej Janowski, currently at CEU. He referred to texts in Czech, Slovak etc. that were not available either in Polish or English. I hope it will also reach a wider public and serve our region, not only the Western public.' 'Has there been no interest in comparative studies in Poland so far?' I wondered. 'Yes, but in a somewhat different direction - Polish-Ukrainian, Polish-Lithuanian, Polish-German and Polish-Jew-

ish have been the most popular and obvious paths to take so far. Central Europe and the Southeast, even Hungary and the Czech Republic, are not so popular. The Reader will go at least some way towards filling the gap. What is also needed is, of course, the willingness of Polish scholars to use it ... It tries to be comprehensive without forcing national traditions into a single mould. We have tried to formulate a way of describing them so that they are comparable but not reinterpret them in a drastically non-orthodox way.'

'How would you explain the point of the Identity Reader to a layman in your own country?' I wanted to know. Michal thought he would quote important Czech figures such as Palacky, Masaryk and so on, and say, "Do you know the similarly important figures of other countries – Hungary, for instance? How come we know about the Czechs and not about the others? That is because we were educated very much within a national tradition.'"

'Why did you take part in this?' I asked the group. 'It has given me much new knowledge,' Michal said. 'Now I plan to offer a course covering Central European history and using the results of this project. But, more importantly, I feel influenced by the style of work, by its comparative and international context. This is a negotiated project. We have really read each other's texts and you can see it in the book as it appears in its final form.'

Vangelis said: 'I was motivated in part by personal friendship with the others, partly by the impulse to get to know and understand similar phenomena in different cultures. We had so many things to learn and the unique opportunity to communicate with peers from our neighbouring countries, which would not have been possible in the past. In the process, I found I had learned many things about my own culture - I scanned texts produced over 170 years.'

'Did something surprise you about the Greek case?' I asked. I can give you one example of such a surprise,' Vangelis answered. 'We are all familiar with the basic texts of the cultural mainstream of our respective traditions, but there are little known alternative texts. One such text I have included is that of a Socialist activist of Jewish origin from Thessaloniki, Abraham Benaroya. During the Ottoman period he would not identify with the Hellenic nation or cause, but afterwards he started learning Greek and developed into a Jewish Greek Socialist. He wrote the history of the first period of the Greek socialist movement. I went through this text and its context in order to recreate the atmosphere of both the socialist movement and the Greek Jewish community.'

'Are you satisfied with the result? How far was it a reflection of your original intention?' I persisted. Vangelis said that it had proved more difficult than expected to include texts which use peculiar language - texts wonderfully representative of national identity but impossible to translate.' For instance, in the Greek case there is a play called *Babylonia* (1843), which I wanted to include. However, I had to settle only for the Introduction rather than part of the play itself. You see, my translator refused to work on it. The text describes how Greeks speaking different dialects, six

or seven characters, come to Nauplion – the first Greek capital - to celebrate the battle of Navarino. Ironically, their speech differs so much that they often misunderstand each other's meaning.'

'More importantly, the Reader will represent our level of understanding of our own cultures and literatures at a point in time. I believe as a group undertaking joint work, we have embarked on a never-ending quest for understanding of the other. I'm afraid that in ten years, with more knowledge and maturity, we would possibly like to see a completely different Reader, maybe based on the same texts but giving them a completely different interpretation. The users of the Reader should keep in mind that it represents a moment in the personal development of a group of young people and that, despite the fact that it will be published, it is work in progress.'

'What about the future?' I asked. Maciej told me they were already thinking of other, follow-up projects: 'I hope this project will not conclude my cooperation with CAS Sofia. One very obvious way to continue and extend the Reader is based on the fact that chronologically it ends in 1945, which is certainly not the end of the processes of formation of national identity.'

The Editor



Analysing Visual Codes

The Visual Seminar is a project just started. It is hosted jointly by two Sofia-based Bulgarian organizations: the Institute of Contemporary Art and the Centre for Advanced Study.

The Visual Seminar is based on the belief that a new century and a new global world have reshaped the relationship between visual culture, art and social life. Visualization turns out to be more and more the dominant cultural code of the late industrial society. Nowadays one witnesses a new visual wave: in the global world the culture of the public image and the 'society of the spectacle' (Guy Debord) are gradually transformed by the new complex structures of the 'display', 'interface', 'billboard', scanned-and-sent

images. Along with the home video, the video clip, and the post-MTV culture, along with the expansion of design, lifestyle and fusion cultures, these new visual-informational hybrids have started saturating everyday life.

This social change redefines the role of visuality in contemporary society by giving new form to public taste. As main transgressors of dominant rules and limits in the contemporary visual sphere, artists should question this situation by challenging the automated visual habits of the 'average citizen'.

All this is especially true of the East European societies in transition because the public life and



tastes in these countries also bear the marks of the communist visual environment – the burden of the totalitarian visual legacy is present in the urban surroundings, architecture, monuments and everyday material culture. Groups of visual bureaucrats and post-official artists are still using and misusing the old visual codes in favour of aggressive neo-nationalism and premature anti-globalism. Mass media in these countries, often populist, easily manipulated, circulate poor (and politically incorrect) imagery, divided between the same outdated legacy and the newly imported and no less manipulative consumerist visuality.

In this unfriendly context, the creative and innovative codes of the contemporary arts (with their specificity - mixing and transgressing systems of values, aggressive breaking of taboos, creation of new objects of desire, ironic quotations and multi-layered playfulness, etc.) are confronting a deficit of interpretation. On the other hand, given the generally poor level of the public's visual literacy, one can say that the visual arts in these countries suffer a lack of 'readability' and therefore cannot achieve a significant public impact.

A further unfavourable condition is the lack of communication between the small group of internationally known visual artists in these countries and the critical minds there: one can speak metaphorically about a split between 'visual' and 'reflexive' elites - the academics and researchers in these countries remain isolated in their own field of closed academic debates with insufficient public impact. The links to cultural journalism in the mass media are either insufficient or non-existent, so journalism remains oriented toward the mass taste and cannot be an ally in achieving a greater public impact of advanced cultural activities. Thus, the potential of these critical elites to influ-



Within the Visual Seminar framework, [Milla Mineva](#) analyses visual representations of Balkan cities addressed to tourists, thus revealing the local culture's desired self-images and ideas of its own identity. This postcard from Sofia is a 'package' revealing local notions of the urban. The choices of sites to offer to the tourist gaze articulate different narratives on the city and thus various strategies for the invention of tradition.



[Luchezar Boyadjiiev](#)'s project 'Hot City Visual' deconstructs humorously the hierarchy of advertisement in urban space and elevates the humbler notices for small and family businesses serving their neighbourhoods to the level of the multinationals' giant signs. Thus, for instance, the sign for a key-cutter's shop outperforms the Philips logo, incongruously installed on top of Sofia's specialised emergency hospital.

ence the cultural policies of the respective country, to be social critics and opinion leaders remains unfulfilled.

The general goal of the project is, first, to create a 'shortcut' between artists and academics in order to reinforce both groups' public impact and, secondly, to create a channel for this impact by connecting them with the field of cultural journalism in the mass media. Thus, we propose neither to focus on the specific production of visual arts nor on specialized academic debates, but on their possible public interaction. The zone of interaction is broadly defined as the visual interface of contemporary culture (starting with the Bulgarian case), which is a zone shared with the public. The zone is observable in the city of Sofia. The public visibility as well as the potential impact of the 'shortcut' would be facilitated by the involvement of mass media representatives in the seminar's events. The ultimate goal is to influence the cultural policies in the country through debate and an increase of public literacy in the field of visuality.

To achieve these goals, the project will:

- initiate events (artistic projects, publications, etc.) and identify existing events that could provoke the beginning of such debate;
- involve the public into the debate by linking important events in the contemporary visual art with the whole visual 'interface' of contemporary urban culture;
- facilitate new interpretative competence in the mass media by involving media staff on a regular and equal basis as participants in the debate.

Specifically, the Visual Seminar Project will develop four modules: a Resident Fellows Programme; a Guest Programme - Visual Statement; a Forum of Visual Culture and a Publishing Programme.

The **Resident Fellows Programme** will be the product of the integration of ICA-Sofia and CAS-Sofia activities and programs on a more theoretical

level. Within a given year, it will host four resident fellows from Bulgaria for a period of six months each. They will come from the fields of contemporary visual art, other artistic areas, or academia. The resident fellows will have a stipend and will reside in Sofia for the period of their fellowships while working on a specific artistic or research project related both to the topic of the 'Visual Seminar' project and to the other activities of CAS and ICA.

The **Guest Programme** will involve the ICA and the CAS hosting two 'by invitation only' artists of international standing each year, for a negotiated period (of up to one month), to work on or to present a specific project related to the objectives of the Visual Seminar. These guest artists will be asked to present publicly their work, to give lectures, to initiate debates and generally become part of the local art scene for a while. At the end of their stays in Sofia a show of their projects will be arranged and (based on previous agreement) the work produced in Sofia may be donated to the Visual Seminar with the prospect of establishing a collection of international contemporary art in Sofia.

The **Forum of Visual Culture** will be the public forum for debate on a particular agenda, serving the circle of the Visual Seminar, specially invited participants (intellectuals, academics, artists, journalists). Its meetings are also intended to involve the media and the public.

The Publishing Programme will include an annual volume with the papers of the researchers and the results of the artistic projects.

On April 20, 2003, the Selection Committee of the Visual Seminar project selected the first fellows: Mila Mineva and the artist Luchezar Boyadziev.



Roles, Identities, and Hybrids

Multiple Institutional Cultures in Southeast Europe within the Context of European Unification

A Project of the Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia

The goal of this collective research project is to explore the zone of intersection, interaction, and hybridization between institutional roles and collective identities. The project is designed to enable individual case studies. It therefore seeks to open a whole field of research, its heuristic perspective inspiring individual researchers to conduct creative and imaginative work.

The intersections mentioned are of special social importance for the countries in Southeast Europe. “Identities” and “roles” are considered to be two different yet interrelated patterns of individual and group behavior, operating simultaneously. The analysis of the various and specific types of their “hybridization” will shed light on this difficult implementation of democratic institutions in Southeast Europe – a region where the import/adoption of institutional models co-exists and interacts with centuries-old identities, new identity-formations, and identity-challenging processes. The elucidation of differences and diversity in this process is relevant for the current social and political agenda of European integration. The project will contribute to our knowledge about the compatibility of the various institutional cultures in Europe and will facilitate their openness for practical negotiations during the unification process.

The main hypothesis of the project is that it is possible to explore the intersections of roles and identities in the institutional cultures in SEE by means of interdisciplinary analysis focused on the dialectical link between cultural images of institutions and institutional practices. Images and practices are considered “bridges” and “zones of interaction” between roles and identities. Cultural images are preconditions for perceiving, adopting, and performing institutional roles in practical contexts; at the same time, they link roles to group and individual identities. In the context of institutional practices, social actors internalize, problematize, contextualize, and transform these images of institutions and institutional roles: this practical adoption and “intimization”

is both a professional and a biographical act. These dialectics open two mirroring questions: How are the patterns of institutional behavior influenced and transformed by identity-formation processes, and how are identities and acts of identifications reshaped by role behavior in the context of institutions?

These questions will be addressed by 26 interrelated and interdisciplinary case studies focusing on Southeastern European countries in two main thematic research lines: 1. “Cultural images of institutions, professions, and conventional social roles” and 2. “Practicing institutional culture. Role behavior and identity-formation processes inside institutions”.

In correspondence with the two research lines, we expect two main groups of methodological approaches: discourse analysis of texts and discursive products; and sociological and anthropological fieldwork on practices in institutional contexts.

The expected result of the research will be an innovative and detailed picture of the institutional culture of Southeast European countries in the time of transition, explaining some region-specific cultural micro-mechanisms of adaptation to institutional behavior and some of the causes of the recurrent crisis of democratic institutions in this part of Europe. These results will provide impulses to the discussion on the compatibility of institutional cultures of Southeast Europe with those of the other countries in the future European “commonwealth of commonwealths”.

On the theoretical level, a detailed model of the interference between structures of group belonging and role competencies will be developed. This model will pave the way for further analogies and inferences – both in time (opening up the field for historical research) and in space (developing by analogy various hypotheses about countries and regions beyond Southeast Europe).

'We, the People' – Visions of National Peculiarity and Political Modernities in the 'Europe of Small Nations'

The following text is a project proposal quite recently developed by Dr. Diana Mishkova in collaboration with Balazs Trencsenyi. It presents, as the rubric Project Nursery would suggest, work in progress. It builds upon the experience, insights and perspective of the Identity Reader - a project whose results are presented in this issue of the CAS Newsletter.

The major purpose of the proposed project is to unearth, collect and compare a number of texts crucial for many European national traditions of political and social thought but omitted from the 'core' European canon since the Enlightenment. It seeks to 'put on the map' the intellectual traditions of those 'small nations' which were in many ways important parts of the European circulation of ideas, but whose 19th and 20th century history of political and social thought remained outside of the mainstream of scholarly scrutiny.

Underlying this 'applied' undertaking is a complex and pioneering research agenda. It sets forth to work out methodological know-how, particularly criteria for selecting, structuring and presenting the most emblematic writings of 'marginalized' national traditions of social and political thinking. Following these organizational principles, the ambition is to help fill in significant gaps in the European intellectual history of the last two centuries. In pursuit of this double purpose, the proposed research will take a *longue durée*, cross-national and cross-regional comparative perspective to (i) the intellectual transformations in Europe (such as fundamental shifts of political and social paradigms, languages and concepts), and (ii) the interconnections between European political cultures.

This strategic design anticipates a far-reaching research scheme, *Political And Social Thought In The 'Other Europe', 18th-20th Centuries*, aiming to reshape the 'European canon' of political thought, making the 'local knowledges' of these cultures accessible to the broader international public and thus creating a

Postcards from the beginning of the XX century



'Typy Polskie';



'Grindedrab' (Dolphin Hunting Party);



'Two Whales';



'Bosnian Serb in Parade Costume';

more encompassing vision of what constitutes the European cultural-political heritage. Obviously we cannot launch such a grandiose enterprise outright. Instead, we want to establish a methodological and structural framework for future endeavors in this direction by proposing to focus on a particular yet critical subject-area: exploring the political instrumentalization of the concepts of 'folk', 'people' and 'ethnos' in the 'Europe of small nations' during the 19th and 20th centuries. The purpose will be to 'map' the discursive and institutional itineraries through which this set of notions became a focal point of cultural and political thought in various European contexts, coincidental with the emergence of political modernity.

Hence the concrete aim of the proposed project is the compilation and publication of two thematically defined volumes. They will incorporate the most representative texts/figures in selected national or regional traditions of political and social thought centering on the various ways in which the references to 'folk culture', ethnicity and the 'people' at large were politically instrumentalized. The two volumes will provide a diachronic view of this overarching theme covering two otherwise intertwining pivotal moments in the development of modern Europe: the period of 'National Romanticism' and the 'Anti-Modernist' challenge which emerged during the period between the two World Wars.

This collecting work will be attended by, indeed embedded into, intensive negotiations over methodology and interpretation. It also implies interest in both texts and contexts. For, in order to accomplish its task successfully, the project is supposed to establish not only an 'alternative corpus' of key texts problematizing our common assumptions about the intellectual outlook of the 19th and 20th centuries – an outlook largely based on the 'canonised' authors from Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy. It would also require the elaboration of a new comparative methodology which takes into account the common European 'pool of ideas' and typological similarities, but also allows for a context-sensitive reconstruction of the various ways of domestication, adaptation and subversion. The analytical part of the individual and collective research is also intended to contextualize the established common traits and local peculiarities in view of institutional practices, which can shed light on the actual trajectories of ideas. The joint research thus aims at an unprecedented cooperative venture of studying the transmission of knowledge and the thematization of sciences from a comparative perspective. Most importantly, this means studying the dissemination of scholarly paradigms and the patterns of institutional interaction, and identifying the agents of cultural transfer.

Therefore, the successful completion of this project, we believe, would make possible the initiation of a broader multi-volume project, comprising a va-

riety of themes and periods, with the intention of reconsidering European intellectual history from the Enlightenment onwards.

The proposed two volumes will present (from the chosen perspective) the intellectual traditions of several East European countries, from three different imperial/post-imperial contexts: Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland; four countries from the 'Nordic Belt' - Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland; and, in a special comparative dimension, the Netherlands and Belgium.

Each volume will consist of:

- a textual selection (possibly full texts, depending on the genre) representing the multiplicity of the given issue in different contexts;
- a set of interpretative essays, authored or co-authored by scholars from different regional settings, creating an encompassing interpretation of the manifestations of the given intellectual tradition in the whole historical space in question.



Valiant Revolutionary Gero Tsiamis
from Chalkidiki



'The Martyred Nations : Serbia';



'It's raining over Christiania';



Szadaroll : Multi-views Postcard

Integrated Database of Ph.D. Students in Bulgaria and an Academic Debate Forum



To day, Bulgaria has no unified, central register with information about the number of Ph.D. students in the country, their institutional affiliations, academic disciplines, dissertation topics etc. Also, communication, exchange of information and integration among young Bulgarian researchers are hardly intensive; the intellectual co-operation between those Ph.D. students working in Bulgaria and the huge number of Bulgarians studying or doing Ph.D.s abroad is insignificant and is the product of accidental private contacts rather than the result of a deliberate academic policy.

This project sets out with the idea that modern communication channels, information technology and the whole youthful Internet culture are an instrument whereby this gap may be filled.



We intend to develop an integrated database with information about the Ph.D. students themselves and a Virtual Debate Forum; we intend to give students virtual access to specialized information, create newsgroups and flexible mailing lists for Bulgarian Ph.D. students in Bulgaria and around the world.

We believe this may provide a kind of 'soft' academic policy to create the information prerequisites capable of activating the internal potential, needs and contacts of Ph.D. students and groups of students in Bulgaria and abroad. This would allow Bulgaria and its research community to keep some contact with the enormous intellectual capital draining out of the country. The project would also be a suitable IT base for a potential state strategy and universities' strategy in the field of research and staff recruitment. Last but not least, this would help the young Association of Ph.D. Students to take root and consolidate its position.

The main partners in this project are:

1. Association of Ph.D. Students in Bulgaria (the project's host);
2. Centre for Training of Ph.D. Students, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences;
3. Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia.

This project has already received the support of the Open Society Foundation

In addition to the support of the organizing partners, the project hopes to receive institutional backing from the Ministry of Education and Science of Bulgaria, from higher education institutions in the country as well as from all non-governmental organizations engaged in developing academic research and cooperation.

The 'Balkan Bibliography' Is Now Ready

Marina Encheva
CAS Librarian

In mid-April 2003 the new 'Balkan Bibliography' became available in print and electronic form.

This bibliography is the final product of a joint project of the Centre for Advanced Study in Sofia and the National Library 'S.S. Cyril and Methodius' and contains full coverage of scholarly publications on the Balkans in the area of social sciences and humanities published in 1985-2001. It is already accessible to the Centre's Fellows and indeed to all interested scholars also through the Internet.

The bibliography - 'Bulgarian Publications on the Balkans 1985-2001' - contains information on books, studies and articles organized into the following categories: Balkan Research Institutions' Historiographic Studies; Balkan Education; Balkan History; Balkan Economic History; Balkan Culture; Balkan Anthropology and Ethnography; Balkan Sociological and Statistical Data; Political and Ethnic Situation in the Balkans; Literary Studies; Linguistics; and Bibliographies and Reference Works.

The new bibliography may be considered a continuation of the bibliography on 'Balkans and Intra-Balkan Relations 15th century-1980s in Bulgarian Scholarly Publications 1878-1984', published by CIBAL - the International Information Centre on the Sources of Balkan and Mediterranean History, and as a supplement to the 'Balkan Bibliographia' of the Institute of Balkan Studies in Thessaloniki.

The new bibliography has two indices: one of personal names, including authors, editors, translators and illustrators; the other of geographic names included in the titles of publications. Thanks to these two indices, the bibliography may be searched in a variety of ways.

The goal of the Centre for Advanced Study and the National Library in carrying out this work was to fill the gap that existed in Bulgarian bibliography on Balkan Studies during the past 15 years, and to offer a useful aid to the Centre's Fellows and the Bulgarian scholarly community as a whole.

Together with the printed version, the Library of the Centre for Advanced Study has prepared two electronic databases of 'Balkan Bibliography'. One covers books, the other articles in periodicals and collections. The electronic interface is based on the WinISIS software package for library automation. It offers users the convenience of simple and advanced keyword searching, and browse searching. Initially these two databases were accessible only through the Local Area Network of CAS, but recently they have been made accessible publicly through the Internet at <http://lib.cas.bg>. (Alternatively, go to the Library Section of the Centre's web-site at <http://www.cas.bg/library.htm>, then choose 'Balkan Studies Database'.)



The seminar directed by Dr. Boyan Manchev, New Bulgarian University, on "The Phantasm, the Subject and the Sense" is also continuing this year, and enjoying similar popularity. The seminar is organized within the framework of the International College of Philosophy, Paris and is hosted by the Centre for Advanced Study in Sofia.



Poetry Seminar Brings More Enjoyment

The Poetry Seminar on Thursday evenings at CAS, described in previous issues of this Newsletter, has continued this year amid even greater interest. The opening event of the series was on 28 November 2002: a reading of works by Ekaterina Yossifova, Olya Stoyanova and Dana Beleva under the heading of 'Peignoirs and Boats'. In early 2003 Christin Dimitrova and Ida Daniel addressed poetically the topic of 'Reserve Music' (9 January). Then came the turn of Peter Chuhov and Mario Nikolov with their attempt at 'Taming Space' (23 January); Nadezhda Radulova and Emanuil Angelov were next, under the heading of 'Grass for Flying' (13 February). Then Ivan Metodiev addressed 'The Poetic Silence as Time' (6 March). Last but not least, Krassimira Zafirova and Nikolay Boykov looked at 'The Details' (10 April).

I must confess I've been always very suspicious when it comes to reading, presenting or performing poetical texts in front of an audience. Being a fan of reader response theories, I've considered the act of performing one's own texts as an ultimately manipulative gesture of closing the 'gaps', filling the 'fissures' of the literary piece with vocal movements and body language, overinterpreting the 'blockages' that are embedded in the textual tissue.

However, I was happily surprised by my experience in the position of both a performer and part of the audience during the Poetry Seminar initiated by the Centre for Advanced Study in Sofia.

As a performer I found that I took great pleasure in interpreting my own work, in participating in the exposing one's literary work to the 'interpretative community' that the audience at the Centre represented.

As part of the audience, I would like to thank all those poets who dared to come together in 'poetic couples' and even 'poetic triangles', through which they created a special tension in the process of opening the texts onto each other, 'abandoning' them and giving them to audience.

Nadezhda Radulova,
*young poet and participant
in the CAS Poetry Seminar*

'Remembering Communism' Continues with an Autobiography Workshop

A discussion of 'History and the Self: Autobiographies and Life Stories' took place at the Centre for Advanced Study on April 25-26, 2003.

It was part of the oral history project on 'Remembering Communism', presented in detail in the previous issue of the Newsletter. Its team, while still looking for sponsorship, is continuing with the preparatory work; this workshop was made possible thanks to the generous assistance of both the Social Science Research Council of New York and CAS as the hosting institution.

The event's coordinators were two acknowledged experts in the field: Prof. Carolyn Steedman from Warwick University, Great Britain, author of the acclaimed *Landscape for a Good Woman*; and Prof. Hanna Schissler from the Georg Eckert Institute, Braunschweig, and the University of Hannover, Germany – an authority on German social history and editor of the recently published *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany 1949-1968*.

The workshop tackled methodological issues. It was aimed at raising the team's awareness of the various problems implied in asking people to tell their life stories and the extent of involvement of the researcher in the situation and in the events he or she studies. The format of the workshop was exceptionally lively and thus did not clash with the festive atmosphere of the Orthodox Easter. It involved mock interviews, discussions of language issues, transference, and concepts of identity, and an analysis of the film *Distant Voices, Still Lives* by Terence Davies. The guest speaker, Elizabeth Bishop, American University in Cairo, Egypt, shared her experience of exploring workers' biographies published in the Soviet Era.



Workshop with Axel Honneth on Social Integration in Post-Traditional Societies

On the 10 February 2003, the Centre for Advanced Study co-organized a lecture and discussion at the European Union Information Centre at 9 Moskovska Street. The other organizer was the Programme in Philosophy at the New Bulgarian University. The lecturer, **Professor Sebastien Charles, from the Faculty of Philosophy, Ethics and Theology at University of Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada talked, in English, about 'Skepticism in Modern Thinking'.** The lecture was part of the guest-programme of Professor Charles at the New Bulgarian University and was followed by a lively discussion.

A Workshop with the participation of Axel Honneth, acclaimed author of *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, took place on 26-27 April in Sofia. Three institutions came together to make this event possible: Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes, whose immaculately renovated beautiful old building in the centre of Sofia hosted the Workshop; the Centre for Advanced Study; and the Foundation for Humanitarian and Social Research Sofia.

The Workshop was on 'Social Philosophy and Cultural Theory: Mechanisms of Social Integration in the Post-Traditional Societies'. On the first day, after the introductions, Axel Honneth spoke about 'Justice and Communicative Freedom'. The lecture, in German with simultaneous interpreting into Bulgarian, linked the various aspects of the concept of recognition to communicative freedom. On the next day, the NEXUS Project's Research Team presented its work on Balkan identities under the heading of 'Multiple Identities and Recognition'.

The Workshop concluded by addressing the issue of 'Identity and Autonomy of the Subject in a Postmodern Situation?' and 'Subjectivity and Sociocultural Context'.

The proceedings will be presented in greater detail in the next issue of the CAS Newsletter.

Editor:
Svetlin Stratiev



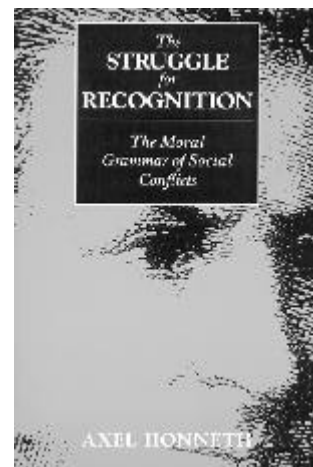
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Social Philosophy and Cultural Theory: Mechanisms of Social Integration in the Post-Traditional Societies

Workshop with the participation of Prof. Axel Honneth, Frankfurt, 26-27 April 2003

Programme

26 April 2003, Saturday

Greetings:

Clemens Peter Hase,

Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes

Dimitër Vatsov,

Foundation for Humanitarian and Social Research
Sofia

Alexander Kiossev,

Centre for Advanced Study Sofia

Symposium:

**The Paradigm of Recognition
as a Form of Social Philosophical Thought**

Chair: Krassimir Stoyanov

Axel Honneth:

Justice and Communicative Freedom
(Introductory paper)

Christo Todorov:

Commentary

Hans-Klaus Keul:

Commentary

Axel Honneth:

Response

Discussion

27 April 2003, Sunday

Presentation of the NEXUS project

'Multiple Identities and Recognition'

(Organizer: the Centre for Advanced Study Sofia)

Presentations of the research team of the NEXUS Project
(**Alexander Kiossev, Blagovest Zlatanov, Boyan Manchev**)

Discussion

**Identity and Autonomy of the Subject
in the Postmodern Situation?**

Chair: **Alexander Kiossev**

Miglena Nikolchina:

Love and Automata. The Place of Rebellion.

Dimitër Zashev:

To the Debate on Recognition

Dimitër Vatsov:

Commentary to 'Decentered Autonomy'

Axel Honneth:

Response

Discussion

Subjectivity and Sociocultural Contexts

Chair: **Dimitër Vatsov**

Milena Yakimova:

Figures of the Rehabilitation
of the Subject in Contemporary Social Science

Krassimir Stoyanov:

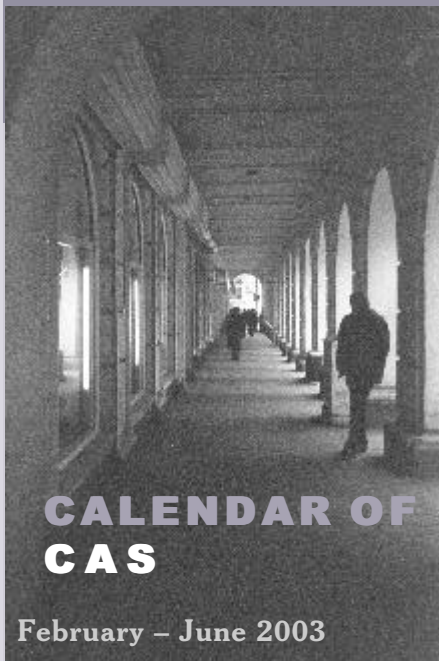
The Cosmopolitan Alternative
in the Discourse of Identity

Boyan Znepolski:

The Provocation of Contemporary Social Philosophy:
From Individuality to Subjectivity

Discussion





CALENDAR OF CAS

February – June 2003

February 2003:

- 10 February: Lecture by Prof. Sébastien Charles: 'Skepticism in Modern Thinking'
- 13 February: Poetry Seminar
- 28 February – 2 March:
NEXUS Fellows' project presentations

March 2003:

- 6 March: Poetry Seminar
- 13, 27 March: Dr. Boyan Manchev's seminar 'The Phantasm, the Subject and the Sense'
- 20, 26 March: Seminar to discuss the ideas and works of Axel Honneth
- 24 March: Presentation of the issue of the *Kritika i humanizam* (Critique and Humanism) journal on 'Reflex Modernity and Tradition'

April 2003

- 9, 23: April Seminar to discuss the ideas and works of Axel Honneth
- 10 April: Poetry Seminar
- 18 April: 'After the Accession' project meeting
- 25, 26 April: 'History and the Self: Autobiographies and Life Stories': workshop within the framework of the Remembering Communism project
- 26, 27 April: 'Social Philosophy and Cultural Theory: Mechanisms of Social Integration in the Post-Traditional Societies': workshop dedicated to, and with the participation of, Axel Honneth

May 2003

- 16-19 May: NEXUS Fellows' project presentations
- 26 May: Ivan Dragoev's lecture: 'Myth and Identity or Why Oedipus Has No Complex'
- 29 May: Dr. Boyan Manchev's seminar "The Phantasm, the Subject and the Sense"

June 2003

- 6-8 June: NEXUS teams meeting – last session
- 26-28 June: Workshop for New Doctoral Research on the History of Southeast Europe co-organized by the Center for Democracy and Reconciliation in Southeast Europe, Thessaloniki, Greece and Centre for Advanced Study Sofia, Bulgaria